

# Advisory Council on Aging and Disability Services

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*Creating choices for elders and adults with disabilities in Seattle-King County*

## MONTHLY MEETING

**APRIL 8, 2005**

### MEMBERS PRESENT

CITY OF SEATTLE	KING COUNTY	UNITED WAY
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Thelma Coney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gabriel Cohen, Vice	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Martha Becker
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Joanne Brekke	<input type="checkbox"/> Helen Spencer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lorna Stone
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adam John	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> John Holecek	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Thelma Pegues
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alexandra Tu	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> John Barnett	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Timmie Faghin, Chair
<input type="checkbox"/> Tom Rasmussen	<input type="checkbox"/> Larry Verhei	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Don Moreland
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Larry Low, Secretary	<input type="checkbox"/> Lisa Yeager, Member At Large	<input type="checkbox"/> Suzanne Wiley
<input type="checkbox"/> Houston Brown	<input type="checkbox"/> Vacant	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Midge Levy
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dr. Robert Gross	<input type="checkbox"/> Vacant	<input type="checkbox"/> Vacant
<input type="checkbox"/> Vacant	<input type="checkbox"/> Vacant	<input type="checkbox"/> Vacant

**Excused Absence** Helen Spencer, Houston Brown, Suzanne Wiley, Tom Rasmussen, Larry Verhei

**Guests** Lori Whittaker, Phil Pitruzzello, Art Mussman, Marc Avni, Marta Vega, Claudia Arana, Pat Melgard, Chris Melgard, Jean Slocum, Jim Street and Kip Tokuda

**ADS Staff** Pamela Piering, Selina Chow, Rosemary Cunningham, Linda Wells, Karen Winston, Margaret Casey, Maria Langlais, Marcy Kubbs, Gigi Meinig and Andrea Yip

**United Way Staff** Linda Woodall

**King County  
Staff**

## DRAFT MINUTES

**Timmie Faghin, Chair** convened the Advisory Council meeting at 12:00 p.m. and invited everyone attending to introduce themselves. She formally welcomed Lorna Stone as a new member of the Advisory Council.

## BUSINESS MEETING

**Action Taken:** It was moved/seconded and passed that the March 11, 2005 minutes be approved after adding Timmie to the excused absence list for March.

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In association with the Area Agency on Aging for Seattle-King County and sponsored by:



City of Seattle



King County

## **COMMITTEE AND TASK FORCE REPORTS**

### **Planning and Allocation Committee**

**Thelma Coney** reported there was no meeting of the Planning and Allocation Committee this month. However, ADS staff is busy working on revisions to the Area Plan objectives that will be available by June, 2005 for review by the Advisory Council.

### **Outreach and Advocacy Committee**

**Gabe Cohen** reported that Lori Whittaker of Jim McDermott's office provided information to the Committee on President Bush's proposed budget which includes the elimination of \$16 million in funding over the next 10 years. The House has approved it while the Senate has their own version of the budget they are debating.

It also appears that there will be cuts in the State budget for aging services. The good news is that the eligibility requirements for state-funded In-Home Care Programs will not be changed, and that it appears the Farmer's Market program will be funded. However, funding for Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) will be reduced by \$5.6 million statewide, of which ADS receives \$1 million. Gabe urged Advisory Council members to:

- 1) Send a letter today to their representative requesting the Legislature reverse their current proposed cuts to AAA's. Gabe provided a template for letters.
- 2) Make a phone call to their representative regarding the proposed \$1 co-pay for medical related transportation and \$3 co-pay for each prescription drug, as this will affect those who can least afford it.

Gabe also reported that next month the On-line Advocacy Tool should be available.

### **Communications Committee**

**Rosemary Cunningham**, ADS staff, reported that visits to the Senior's Digest website rose to 11,000 visits or "hits" last month. In addition, May's issue will focus on the fact that it is Older Americans Month. Thelma Coney will be profiled and it will include an article on Larry Verhei's agency, the Hearing, Speech and Deafness Center.

While information on Advanced Directives was included in April's issue of Senior's Digest, Timmie mentioned Senior Rights Assistance has a comprehensive checklist to assist one in making decisions about their legal, financial and medical affairs. It is available at 1-888-4Elders.

### **Health Care Task Force**

**Martha Becker** reported that the Task Force had a joint meeting with the Outreach and Advocacy Committee this month. She also indicated that the legislation relating to Hearing Aid Insurance has been tabled. The Northwest Coalition on Universal Design is holding its next meeting on April 15<sup>th</sup> from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the Hearing, Speech & Deafness Center.

## **State Council on Aging**

**Joanne Brekke** reported that a representative from the Administration on Aging spoke with the State Council on Medicare, Part D covering prescription drugs which they have been assigned to develop. Apparently the premium will be \$45 per month and individuals will face a penalty for not signing up by the deadline.

John Barnett added that under the current drug plan 130,000 individuals in Washington State are eligible for the \$600 drug benefit, but most have not used it. Nationally, apparently 75% of individuals who are eligible have not taken advantage of the benefit.

## **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

In addition to reporting on the proposed cuts in funding to the AAA's, **Pam Piering** indicated there are several pluses in this year's Legislative picture that include:

- Funding the Farmer's Market Program
- Increase in wage for Independent Providers and Home Care agency workers
- Funding for the Kinship Navigator position

She reported that Linda Wells and the ABC Coalition have worked hard to get out word on the \$600 drug benefit. Currently about 600 individuals are enrolled in King County.

ADS will be conducting two RFPs this year. The Caregivers RFP will be posted to the web this Thursday, and in June the Special Information and Assistance (I & A) RFP targeting limited English speaking individuals will be conducted.

Pam reported that she recently participated in briefing City Council members on Elder Abuse issues. She indicated the presentation was well received and sparked a good discussion on the topic.

In addition to reminding members of the N4A conference being held on July 9-13 at the Meydenbauer Center in Bellevue, Pam indicated there are two upcoming educational events that ADS would pay for Advisory Committee members to attend. They include:

- 1) On April 28, 2005 the Healthy Aging Partnership conference on civic engagement will be held at the new Yesler Community Center from 8:30 am-1:00 pm. It will include a free lunch and provide seniors with an opportunity to talk about community engagement. The speakers will include King County Executive Ron Sims, City Councilmember Tom Rasmussen, Nancy Amidei and Advisory Councilmember, John Barnett.
- 2) On May 4, 2005 the Healthy Aging Summit will be held at the Tukwila Community Center. Dr. David Sobel will be speaking on how to promote healthy aging.

Claudia Arana, the new Boards and Commissions Administrator in Mayor Greg Nickels' office, attending today's meeting was introduced.

**PROGRAM TOPIC**  
**SOCIAL & CIVIC ENGAGEMENT: SOCIAL SECURITY**

**Timmie Faghin, Chair** introduced our speakers, **Glenn Pascall**, Economic Consultant and Dean Hubert Locke, from the University of Washington Evans School of Public Affairs.

**Glenn Pascall** indicated that Social Security has been extremely successful in keeping the elderly out of poverty. Post World War II, older adults were twice as likely to be living in poverty as they are now. He added that the biggest cause of bankruptcy is due to: 1) high health care costs, and 2) eligibility requirements that make getting rid of assets a necessity.

Describing an article on Social Security by David Broder, Glenn indicated Broder reports Medicare is actually in much deeper trouble than Social Security. Reportedly, the magnitude of tax increase that would be required to make the Social Security System solvent for the next 75 years would only make Medicare solvent for 4 months.

Pascall indicated that proposals to move Social Security funds to private accounts, would be meaningful if individuals had more money. Currently the percentage of individuals actually able to save for retirement is low. Also the proposed mechanisms for moving money from Social Security to the stock market are extremely expensive costing potentially \$2-3 trillion. Quoting Lao-Tzu, a famous Chinese philosopher from 600 B.C., Mr. Pascall stated, "It is the way of God to take from those with too much and give to those with too little. It is the way of man to take from those who have too little to give to those who have too much."

**Hubert Locke** stated that Social Security has enabled the elderly to live autonomously rather than moving in with their children as had been the practice in years past. Also, the average age of death has risen since the inception of Social Security, contributing to solvency issues. In fact, today's retirees will receive 2-3 times what they have actually contributed to Social Security.

Dean Locke stated that the Bush Administration seems convinced that society functions best if all individuals are responsible for themselves. He believes that this Administration's concerns about the Social Security System are a "Fraud", that the real intent is to abolish Social Security not reform it. From his perspective, the proposed borrowing of \$2 trillion dollars to switch funds from Social Security to private accounts thereby causing further insolvency for the Social Security System shows the intent of the proposal. He added that a study of Sweden's system of private accounts indicated that contrary to expectations, individuals tended to invest in higher risk accounts which put them at greater risk of losing money.

When questioned about potential improvements to make Social Security more solvent, Mr. Pascall indicated modest changes could include:

- Increasing the retirement age, keying it to longevity so more individual's will stay in the work force
- Lifting the cap on payroll tax contributions so that those who can afford to contribute more do so

He added that there has been an incredible increase in disparity of wealth in our country. In 1970, the average CEO made 50 times the wage of the average worker. Currently the average CEO makes 500 times the wage of the average worker. Dean Locke added that what really is at stake here is a moral question – “Will we look out for one another?”.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

## **NEXT MEETING**

**Friday, May 13, 2005  
12:00 – 2:00 p.m.  
13<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room  
Alaska Building  
618 Second Ave, Seattle, WA 98104  
[www.adsadvisorycouncil.org](http://www.adsadvisorycouncil.org)**

Larry Low, Secretary \_\_\_\_\_